

December 15, 2015

**Announcement of 2015 Milken Educator Award
Hugo A. Owens Middle School, Chesapeake, VA**

Jane Foley, senior vice president, Milken Family Foundation: May I have the envelope, please?

(Applause)

The Milken Educator Award goes to your principal, Amber Dortch!

(Applause)

Amber Dortch: I was completely surprised and shocked. I was so excited that you all were coming out here to recognize my students and my teachers, and we worked really hard to prepare it because I wanted it to be the best celebration it could be for them and all their hard work.

I accept the award for all of us because this is something that we all do together. No one person can do it on their own.

I'm still shaken — floored actually. We have so many amazing teachers in our building that any number of them could have received this award today. And so I'm just honored to accept it for all of us. You are only as good as the people that you work with, and my teachers work hard. They're here in the mornings very early. They stay late with students. They make those personal connections with kids every single day.

I want to use the award itself to maybe get it out there about education, about some of the needs that we have ... in Virginia, but ... across the nation, I'm sure. Whether it be speaking for teachers and what teachers need, or getting more funding in our classrooms, or different programs that really could reach children and help them — so, to be a voice.

The scores that are out there, all of the accolades that we earn are because of you and everything you give every single day. And you make me so proud!